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SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

NEA FOR FRONT OFFICE; NEA/SA/EX FOR RICHIE; DEPT FOR DS/IP/ITA; DEPT FOR DS/IP/NEA; NSC FOR ABRAMS/DANIN; USAID FOR DCHA, DCHA/FPP

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SUBJECT: WB/G SITREP: TWO PALESTINIAN YOUTHS INJURED IN THE WEST BANK APRIL 12-13; IN THE GAZA STRIP, THE IDF DISCOVERS TWO EXPLOSIVE DEVICES AND TWO MORTAR SHELLS -- APRIL 13, 2005 (1300 HOURS LOCAL)

This is a joint ConGen Jerusalem/Embassy Tel Aviv cable.

1. (SBU) Summary: One Palestinian youth was injured critically when a stray bullet hit him in the chest in Tulkarm in the West Bank April 12. Another Palestinian youth was injured in the Balatah refugee camp in Nablus when an explosive device detonated in his hands April 12. Two mortar shells were discovered near Gadid in the Gaza strip April 13. Two explosive devices were also discovered, according to the IDF, near Karni and Rafah April 12. End Summary.

West Bank

(SBU) ATTACKS:

-- Deaths: Nil.

-- Injury: A Palestinian youth on April 12 sustained critical injuries when a stray bullet hit him in the chest as he stood on the roof of his house in Tulkarm. Palestinian sources claimed that the bullet likely originated from the direction of the Israeli District Coordination Office, located several hundred meters away from the house.

-- Injury: A Palestinian youth on April 12 suffered critical injuries in the Balatah refugee camp in Nablus, after an explosive device detonated in his hands.

(SBU) ARRESTS/SECURITY:

-- Arrest: The IDF on April 12 arrested a Palestinian teenager at the Huwwara checkpoint, south of Nablus, after he attempted to detonate one of five homemade bombs that he carried underneath his overcoat.

-- Arrests: The IDF on April 12 arrested three Palestinian youths in Salim village, east of Nablus. The youths had thrown firebombs at Israeli vehicles traveling in the West Bank.

-- Shooting: Palestinian gunmen on April 12 fired on IDF soldiers in the Qaddim settlement, southeast of Jenin. There were no reported injuries from this incident.

(SBU) DEMOLITIONS:

-- Israeli bulldozers on April 13 demolished two Palestinian homes in the village of Anata, on the outskirts of Jerusalem, for lacking the proper building permits.

(SBU) POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS:

-- Palestinian media reported on April 13 that the Palestinian Authority (PA) cabinet has approved a resolution to unify all official media institutions under the control of the PA Ministry of Information. The cabinet also approved the creation of a media executive council, to be headed by the Information Minister, that will include Palestine Broadcasting Corporation, Wafa News Agency, and the State Information Service (SIS).

-- Israeli and Palestinian media reported on April 13 that Abdel-Fatah Hamayel, a former PA cabinet minister who is heading a committee responsible for disarming Palestinian gunmen, stated that some 200 Palestinians have already signed a pledge not to carry out acts of violence. Hamayel reported that 80 former gunmen have enlisted with the PA security services, even though they have yet to turn over their weapons to the PA.

-- Fatah secured 23 seats, followed by 22 seats for Hamas, during April 12 student council elections conducted at Bir Zeit University in Ramallah. Pro-PIJ activists won one seat,

a coalition of PFLP/DFLP/FIDA won three seats, and the Palestinian People,s Party and an independent bloc each won one. Hamas activists have led the council since 1994.

Gaza

(SBU) ATTACKS:

-- Deaths: Nil.

-- Injuries: Nil.

-- Mortars/Rockets: According to the IDF, two mortar shells were discovered near Gadid April 13.

-- Shootings: Nil.

-- Explosive Devices: The IDF reported that its troops discovered two explosive devices April 12, one north of Karni crossing and another one north of Rafah.

(SBU) INCURSIONS/DEMOLITIONS: Nil.

(SBU) BORDER CROSSINGS:

-- Route Four (Salahadeen Road), the main north-south traffic artery, was open April 13, with a major detour at Netzarim Junction. Abu Khouli checkpoint was open April 13.

-- Erez Crossing was open for internationals and for a limited number of Palestinians April 12, and 4,606 laborers and 250 merchants crossed into Israel.

-- The Erez Industrial Zone was open April 12 and 674 laborers entered.

-- Sufa Crossing was closed for Palestinian laborers April 13, but was open for the import of aggregates used in construction.

-- Karni Terminal was open, but operating slowly April 13.

-- Rafah Terminal was open for arrivals and departures April 13.

-- Tel al-Sultan checkpoint was closed April 13. Toufah checkpoint was open for residents of al-Mowassi.

(SBU) POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS:

-- According to Israeli media, PM Sharon announced April 13 that the homes of settlers in Gush Katif will not be destroyed if disengagement plans are coordinated with the Palestinians in July.

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